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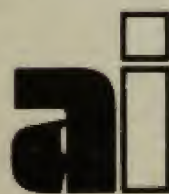
HERMAN MELVILLE

# *Billy Budd*



# **Billy Budd**

**Herman Melville**



**Academic Industries, Inc.**

**West Haven, Connecticut 06516**

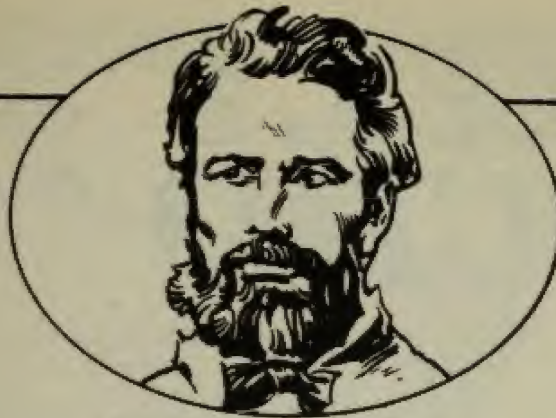
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### about the author

Herman Melville was born in 1819. His formal education ended in 1834, at age fifteen. For a time he was both clerk and school teacher, but the sea was his first love. He became a cabin boy on a merchant ship bound for England. Later, in 1841, Melville joined the crew of a whaling ship, the *Acushnet*, where he learned much of the background for *Moby Dick*.

Melville was influenced by the writing of Nathaniel Hawthorne and dedicated *Moby Dick* to him. Melville felt that Hawthorne had an insight into human nature that few could surpass.

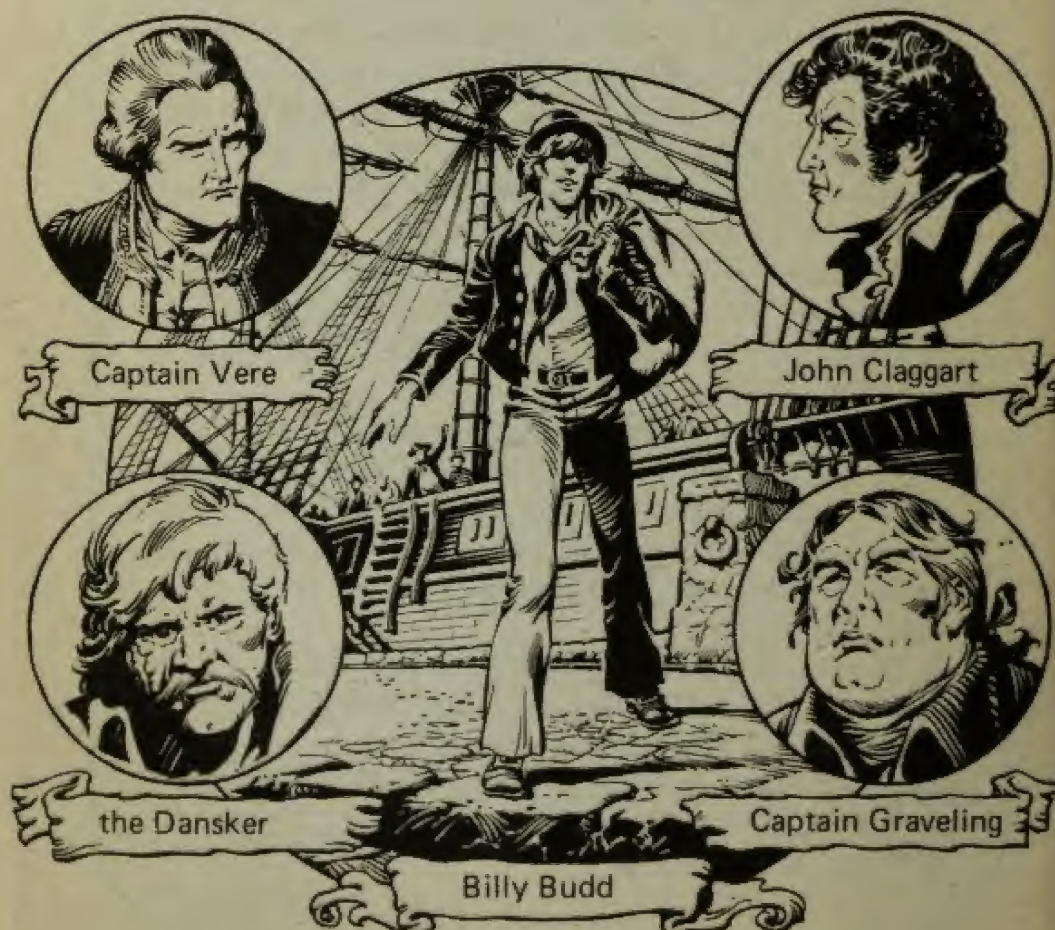
Melville, too, knew mankind mainly from living in many cultures. His life with the Taipis, cannibal natives, led him to write *Typee*. From a mutiny he experienced, he wrote *Omoo*. One of his later books, and most heart-rending is *Billy Budd*—the story of a young and severely abused seaman.

In spite of his unusual creative ability, Melville spent nineteen years of his life as a customs officer in the ports of New York City. Not until after his death was he truly appreciated as an author. Today *Moby Dick* is considered to be one of the greatest, if not the greatest, American novel.



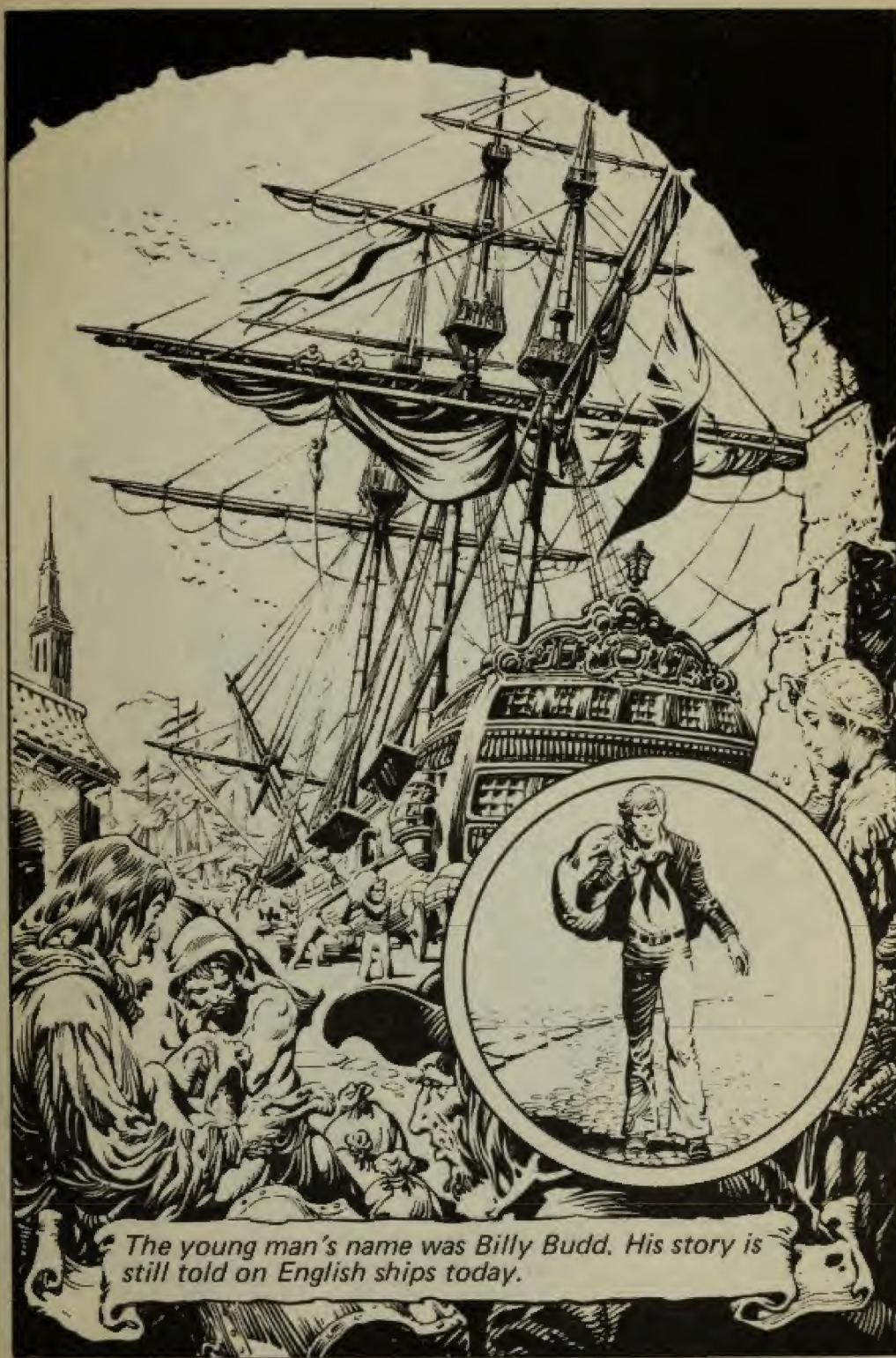
# BILLY BUDD

Herman  
Melville





## Billy Budd



*The young man's name was Billy Budd. His story is still told on English ships today.*

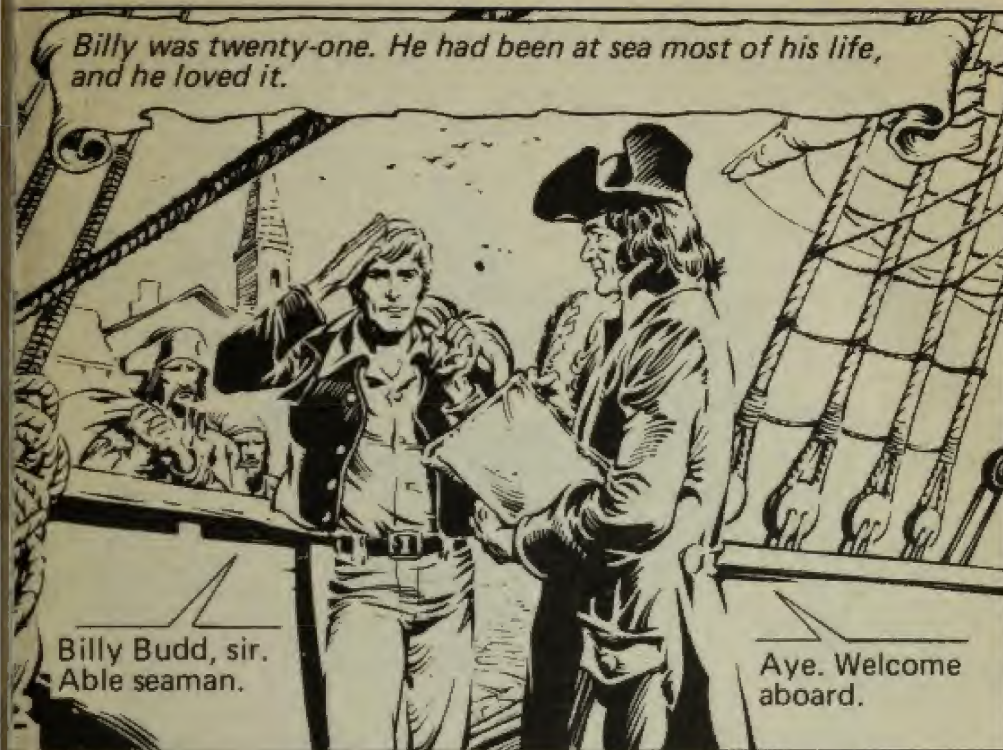


## POCKET CLASSICS





## Billy Budd





## POCKET CLASSICS

*At the start of any trip, the crew was divided into two "watches" or periods of work. The first mate chose someone for the larboard watch. The second mate then chose a man for the starboard or right watch. Back and forth it went between the mates until every man was chosen.*



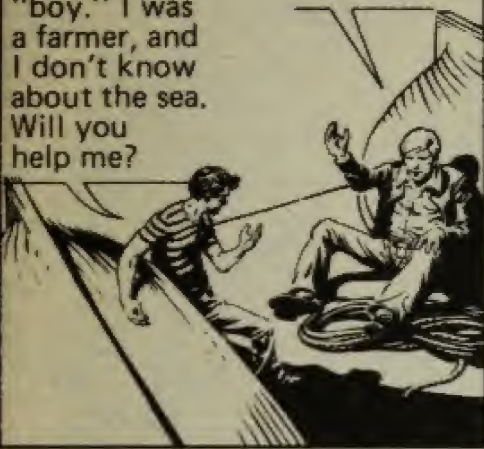
*Billy was one of the first sailors picked. The "boys," on the other hand, were chosen last. These were the men who had never been to sea before.*



## Billy Budd

I'm the new "boy." I was a farmer, and I don't know about the sea. Will you help me?

Of course.



But I can't read or write.

Most sailors can't. I can't either. But you'll learn fast.



The bow is in front—with the forecastle where we sleep. The officers' quarters are aft.

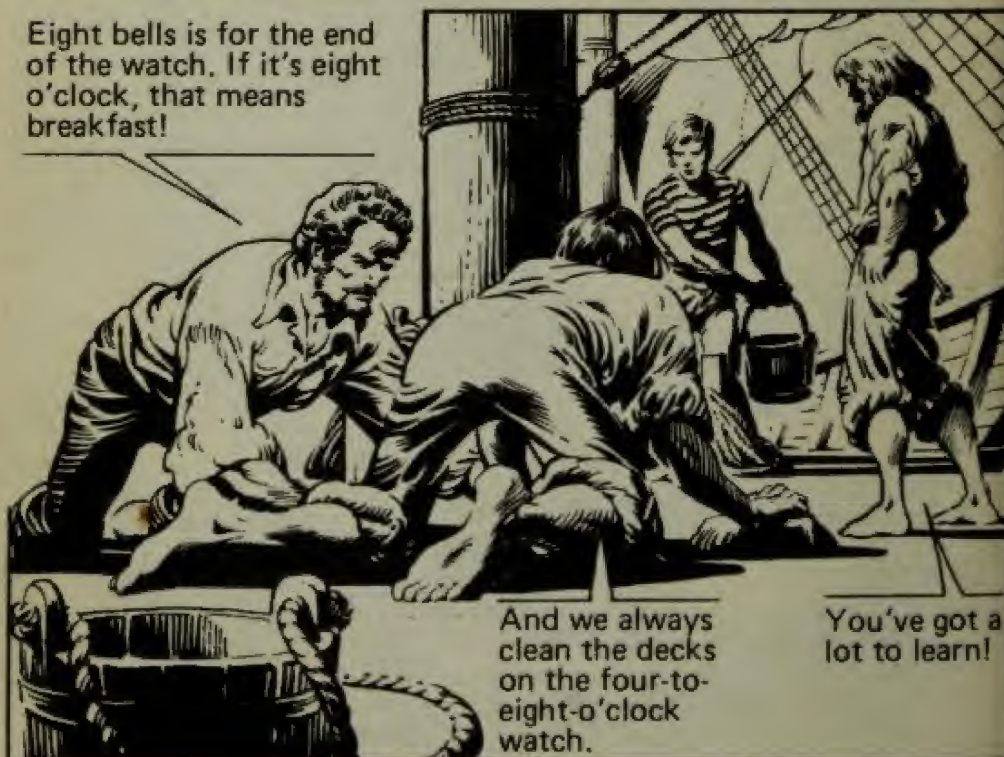




## POCKET CLASSICS



Eight bells is for the end of the watch. If it's eight o'clock, that means breakfast!





## Billy Budd

*Eight bells rang out. The men rushed down to the fore-castle for their tin cups, and got coffee from the cook-house.*

Max brought us our food. Spoon it onto your plate.

But take your place in line—last—behind the handsome sailor.



Soon we'll have the same thing for breakfast that we do for dinner and supper.

Right. Salt beef and hardtack — with beetles and worms!

If the biscuit's too hard for your teeth, crack it on your partner's head!





## POCKET CLASSICS

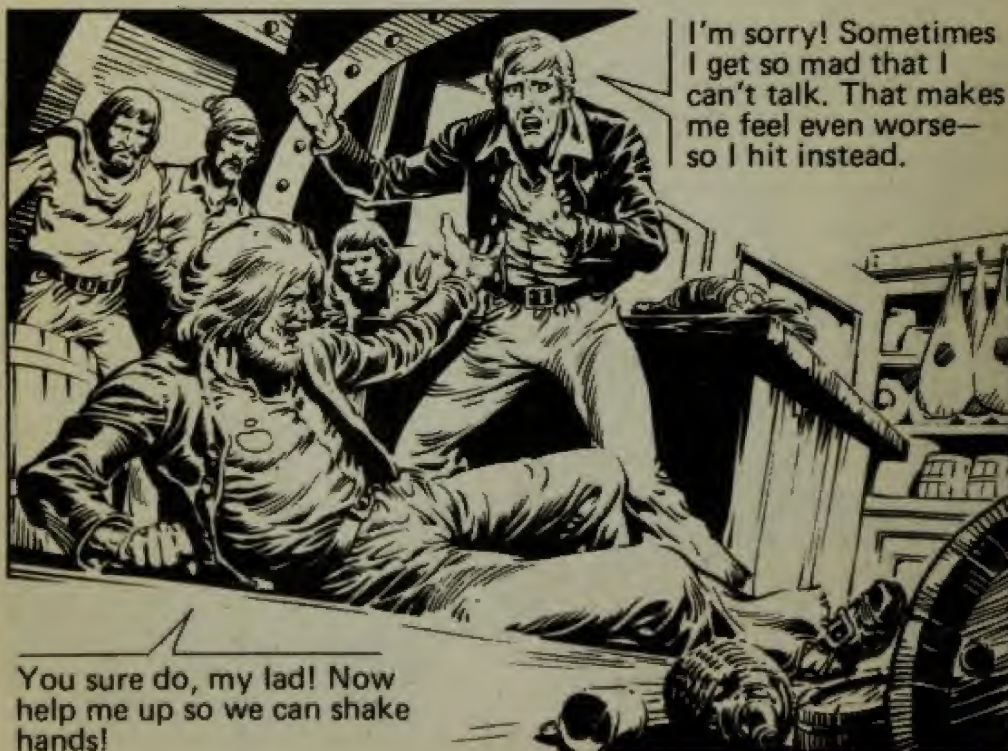
*Red Whiskers, one of the older sailors, hadn't liked Billy at first. But Billy kept smiling. Then one day Red Whiskers went too far.*



*He gave Billy a poke in the ribs.*



*Billy tried to answer and couldn't. Instead, he knocked Red Whiskers down.*



*You sure do, my lad! Now help me up so we can shake hands!*



## Billy Budd

*Later Billy and Henry worked on the sails.*

The mainmast is in the center.  
The foremast is toward the bow.  
The mizzenmast is aft.

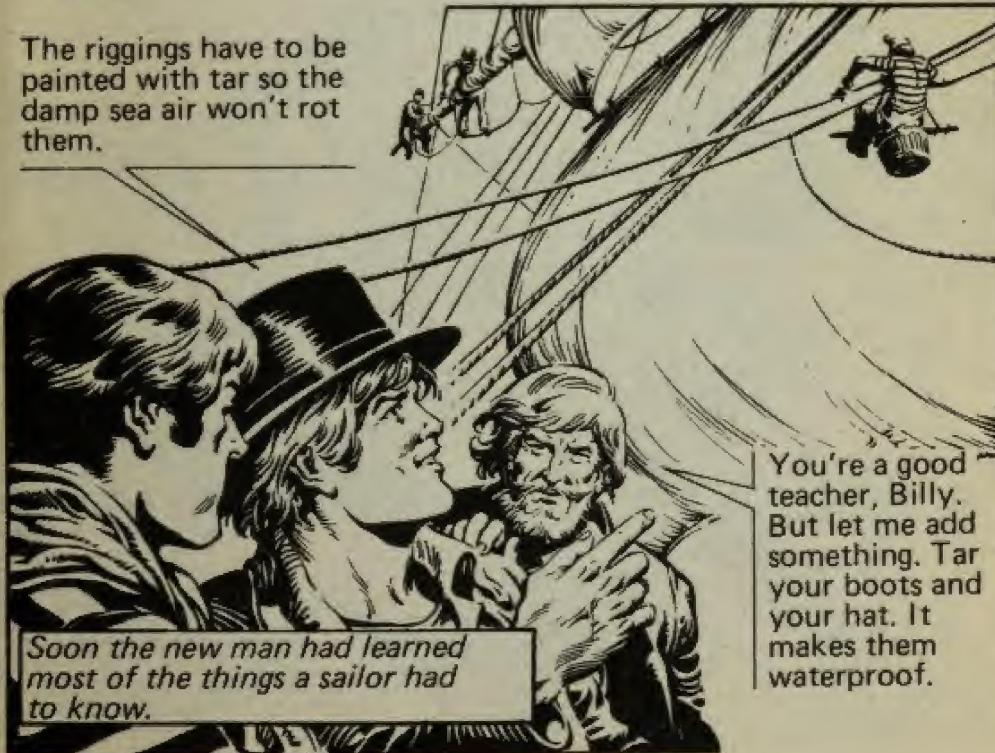


Right. We're climbing down the shrouds now.

All of the sails have names.  
And so do all the riggings  
—down to the smallest rope.



The riggings have to be painted with tar so the damp sea air won't rot them.

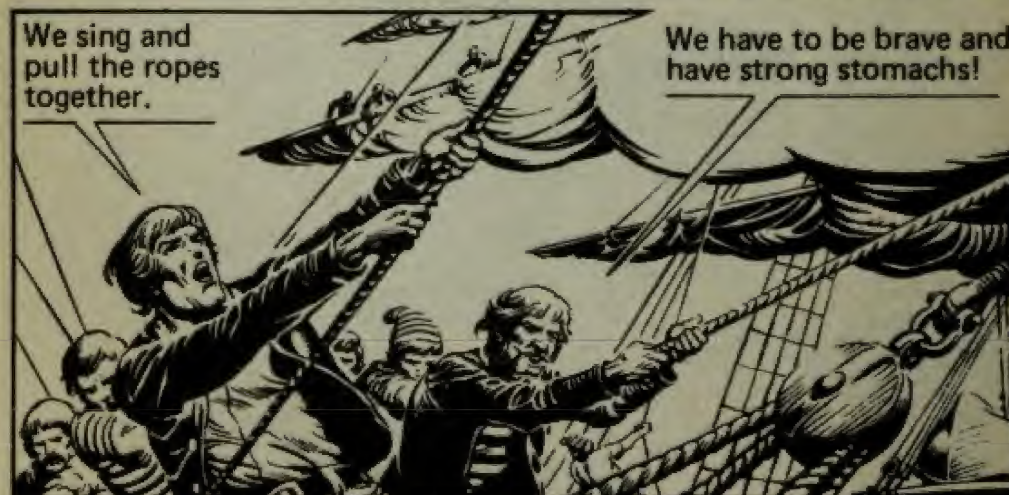


*Soon the new man had learned most of the things a sailor had to know.*

You're a good teacher, Billy. But let me add something. Tar your boots and your hat. It makes them waterproof.



## POCKET CLASSICS



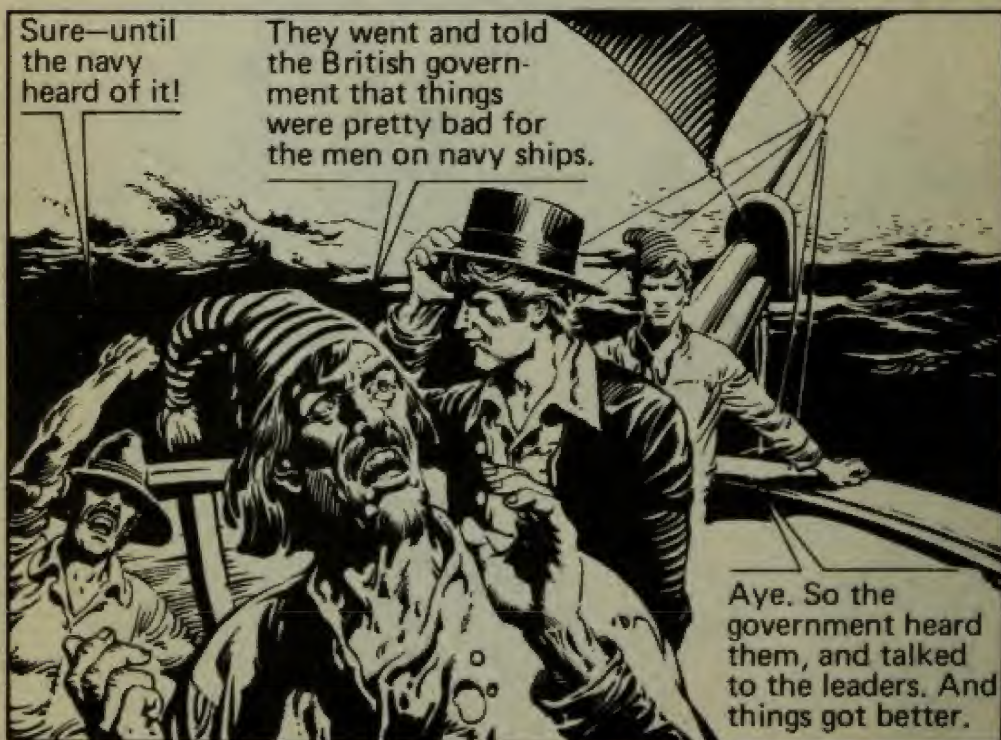
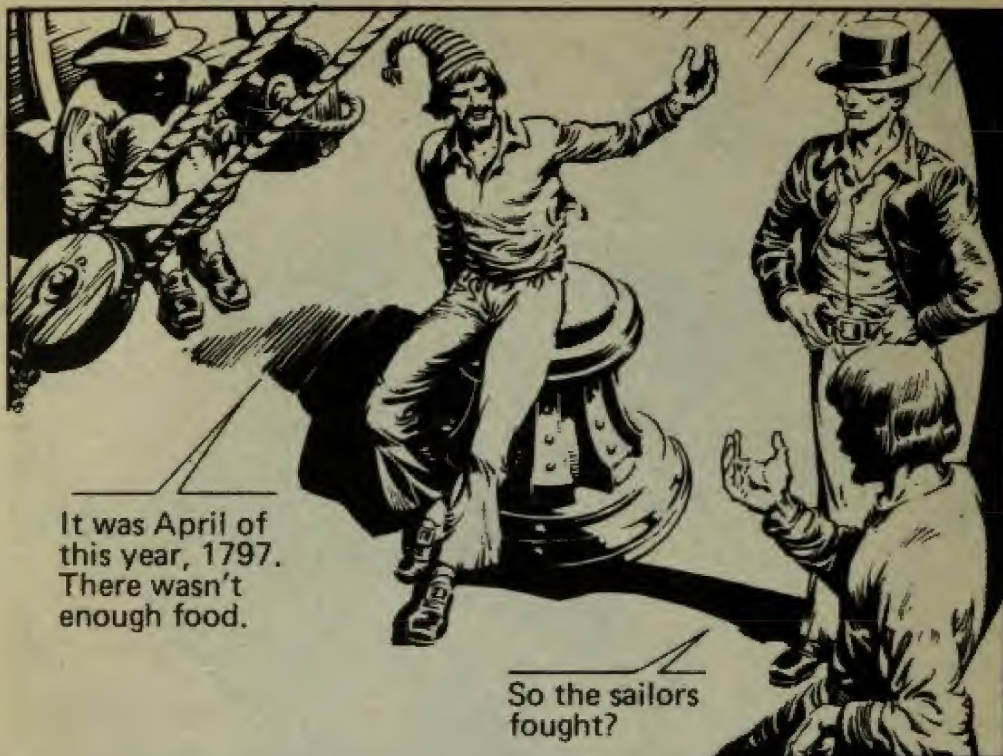


## Billy Budd



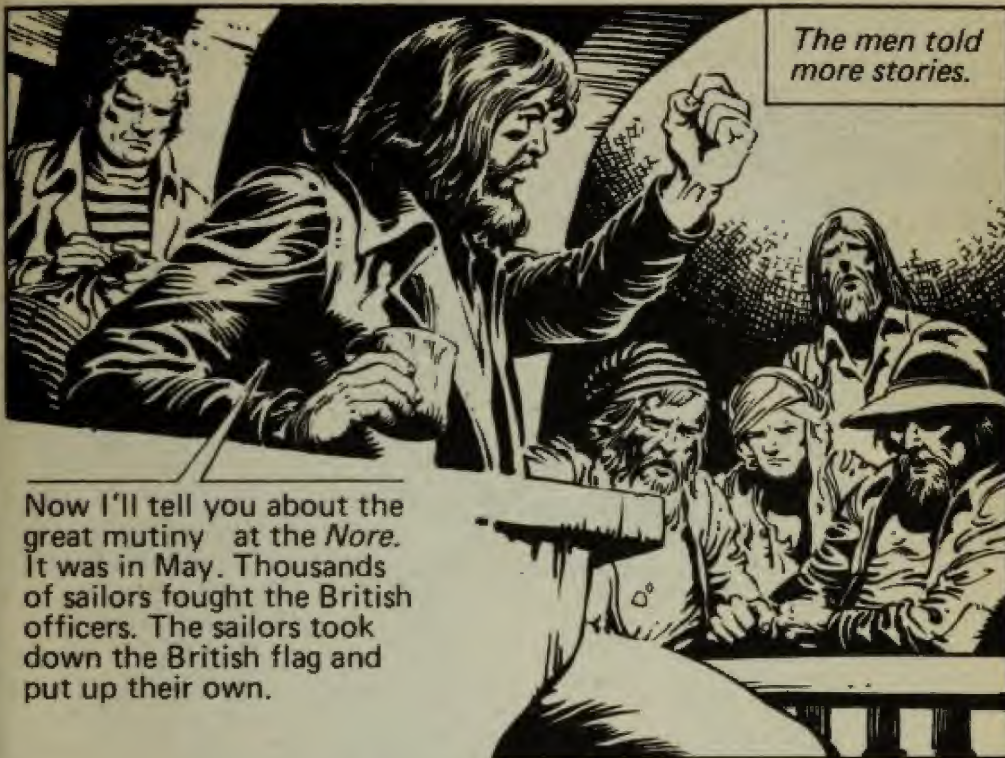


## POCKET CLASSICS

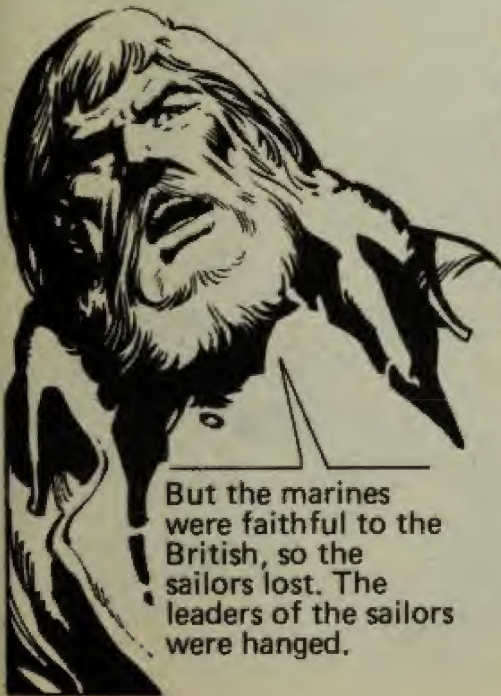




## Billy Budd



Now I'll tell you about the great mutiny at the *Nore*. It was in May. Thousands of sailors fought the British officers. The sailors took down the British flag and put up their own.



But the marines were faithful to the British, so the sailors lost. The leaders of the sailors were hanged.



A sailor's life is still hard. And every captain watches his crew very closely.



## POCKET CLASSICS

*Billy was lucky to sail on the Rights Of Man. Captain Graveling was a fair man, and the crew liked him. The crew also liked Billy.*



There you are, handsome Billy. I sewed your jacket for you! It's as good as new.

Thank you!



You're the best in the sky ropes, but I'm better with a needle.

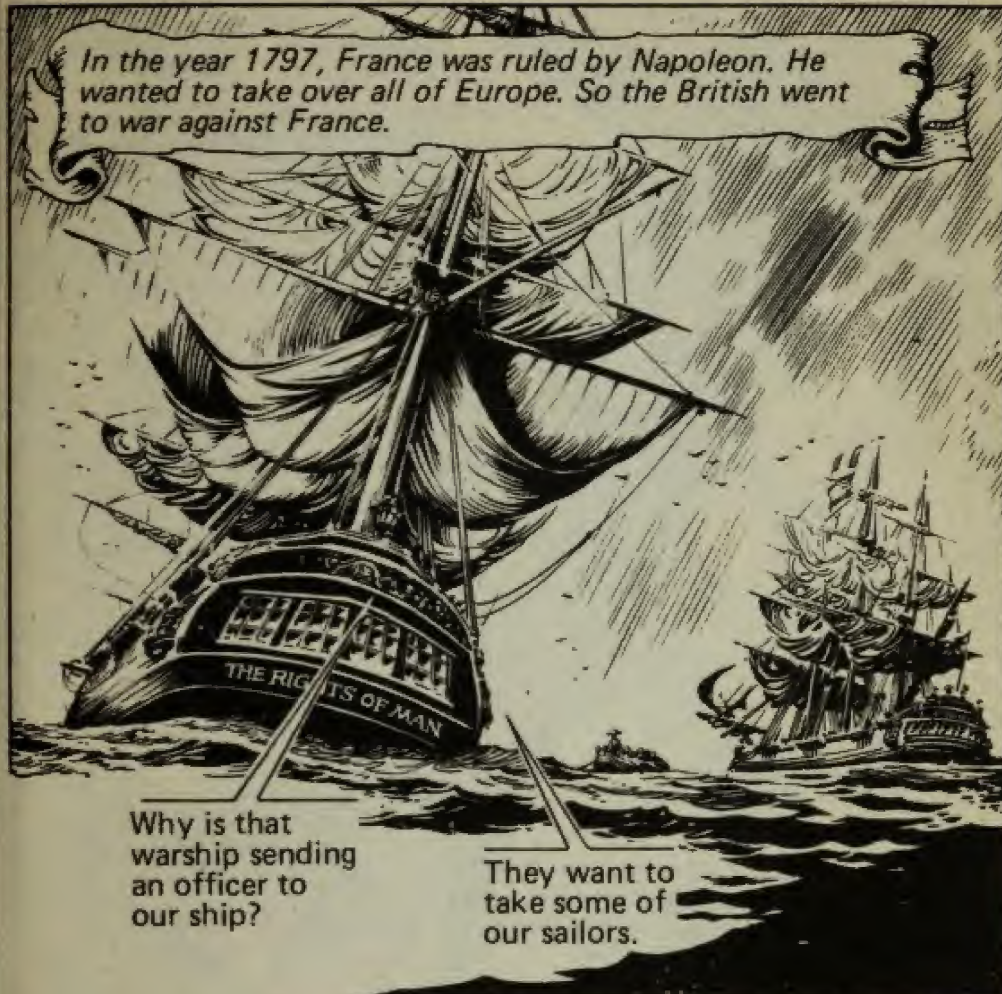
*One day the carpenter took Billy down to his workshop.*



There you are, my lad! I made it just for you. Just a way to say thanks for the times you cheered me up.

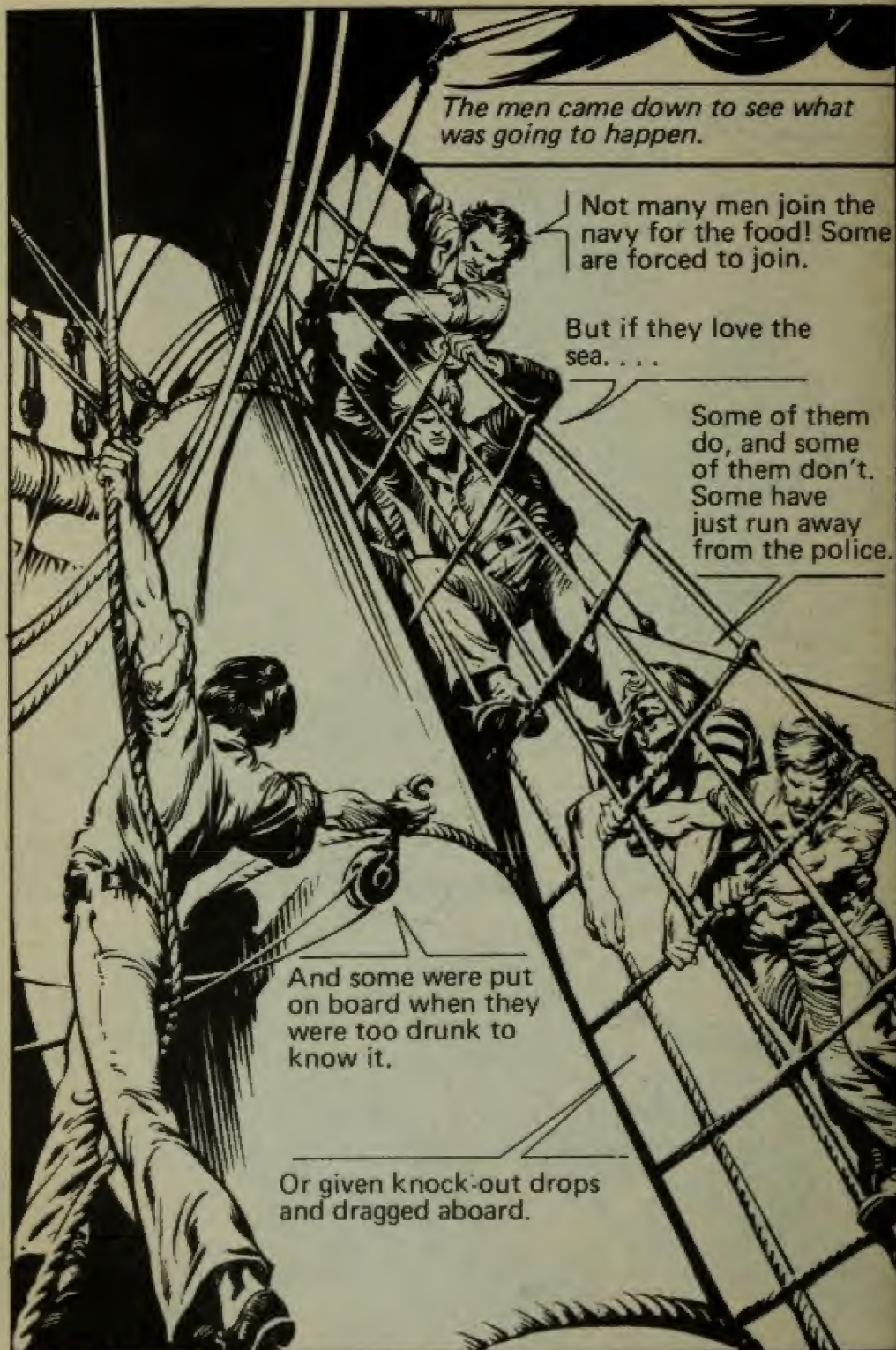
My dear friend! It's beautiful!







## POCKET CLASSICS



*The men came down to see what was going to happen.*

Not many men join the navy for the food! Some are forced to join.

But if they love the sea. . . .

Some of them do, and some of them don't. Some have just run away from the police.

And some were put on board when they were too drunk to know it.

Or given knock-out drops and dragged aboard.



## Billy Budd



Your name and age, lad.

Billy Budd, sir. Age twenty-one.



I'll take Billy. Now, Captain Graveling, kindly show me the rest of your crew.



*Billy Budd was the only man that Lt. Ratcliffe wanted.*

Get your things, Billy. I'll have a drink with your captain.



## POCKET CLASSICS



Sir, you are taking my best man.

Yes, I know.  
I'm sorry.



Before I had Billy, my men were always fighting.

He is like a big, friendly St. Bernard dog. Everybody loves him.



King George III will be happy to learn he is getting such a good man for his navy.



## Billy Budd

It's no joke, sir.  
You're taking  
my peacemaker.

Sorry. We  
need him.

Billy, you cannot take that  
big box on board a warship.  
Put your things in a bag.



Billy, we'll miss you.  
Aren't you sorry to  
leave?

Aye. But it's like a  
change in the weather.  
What can you do but  
face it with a smile?





## POCKET CLASSICS





## Billy Budd

*Once on board the Indomitable, Billy was quickly taken to an officer.*

William Budd, where is your place of birth?

I don't know, sir.



Who was your father?

I don't know, sir.



Do you know anything about your beginnings?

No, sir. But I've heard that I was found in a basket at someone's house in Bristol.



*Although he could not answer the officer's questions, the men could see that he was healthy and would make a good sailor. So Billy was rated as an able seaman.*



## POCKET CLASSICS

*The Indomitable was a seventy-four, meaning that the warship carried seventy-four cannons.*



I've never seen so many men in my life! How many are on board?

I don't know for sure. Maybe 500. Plus the marines and other soldiers.



It's like a country of its own, with the captain as king. We're all divided into small groups.



We each have certain jobs to do, and every minute is planned for us.



## Billy Budd





## POCKET CLASSICS



Breakfast is at eight o'clock. Dinner is at twelve. Supper is at four. And no more eating for sixteen hours!



Eight bells. Danny's gone to get our food. So pull up a shot box.



Danny, are you sure the cook didn't cheat us?

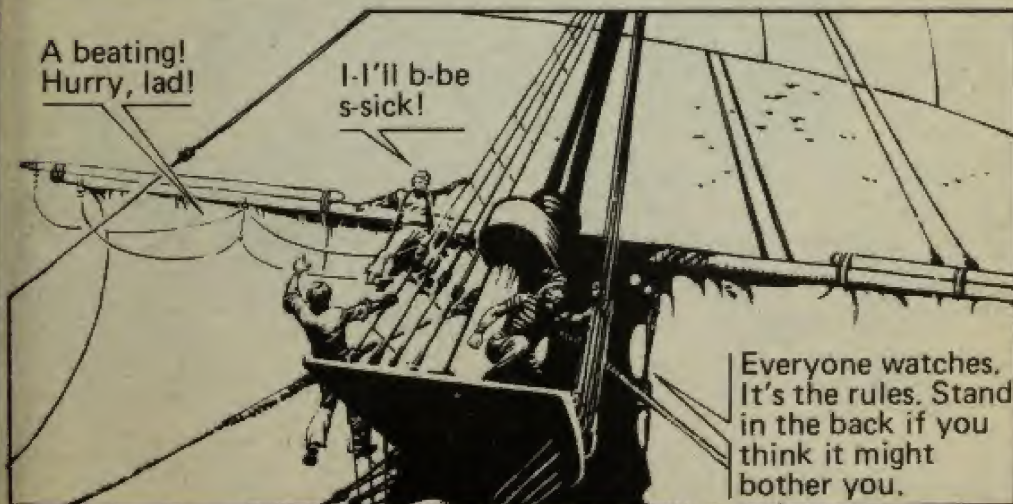
Salt beef, hard tack, and rum. All here.

I'm used to that.

*Billy felt at home right away.*



## Billy Budd



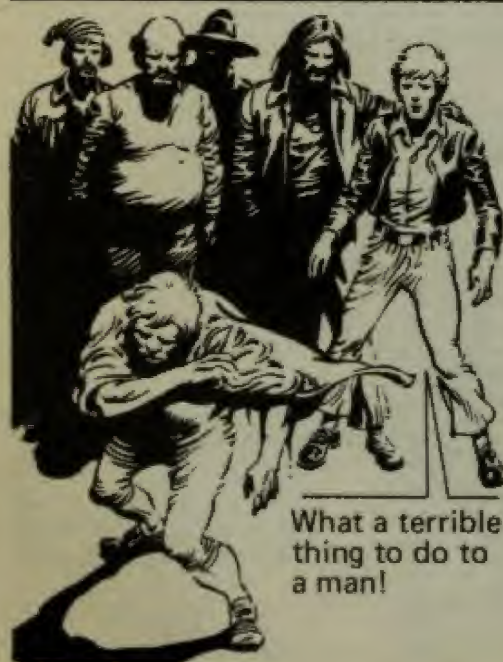


## POCKET CLASSICS

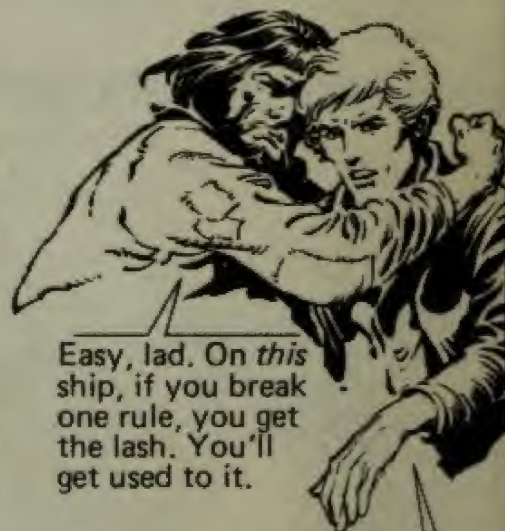


Prisoner, you have broken the rules. You are to get twelve lashes. Take off your shirt.

*The first lash drew blood. By the twelfth lash, the prisoner's back was cut to pieces.*



What a terrible thing to do to a man!

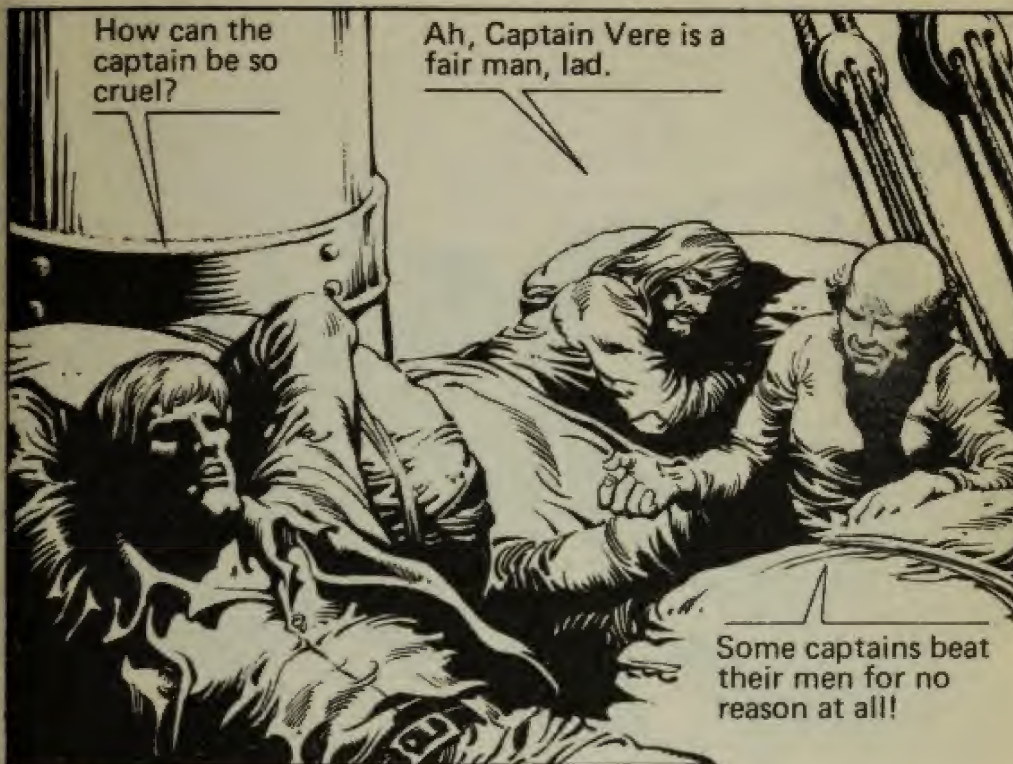


Easy, lad. On *this* ship, if you break one rule, you get the lash. You'll get used to it.

Never!



## Billy Budd





## POCKET CLASSICS

Sailor, be more careful.

But what have I done?

The corporal keeps finding things wrong with me!

Well, sew yourself up in your bag, and keep your eyes open.



*Billy looked to an old sailor called the Dansker for help.*

Billy, Jemmy Legs is out to get you. His name is Claggart, the master-at-arms. Watch out for him!

But he always has a good word for me when I pass him.





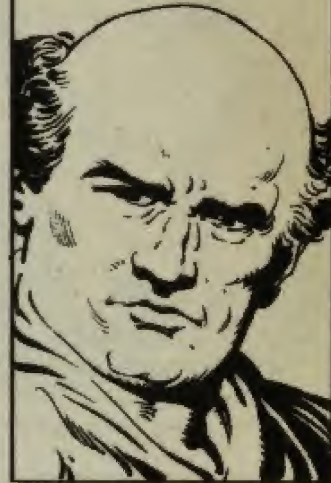
## Billy Budd

*Soon it was mealtime.*

What do you know of John Claggart, the master-at-arms?

Little except for what I've heard about him. You can be sure that he never sailed before this trip.

Aye. He may be in charge now, but I bet the police were chasing him on land.



*The ship moved suddenly. Billy's soup spilled out on the deck just as Claggart was passing.*



*As Claggart was smiling, the men felt they had to laugh.*



## POCKET CLASSICS

*The master-at-arms continued on his way, talking to himself.*



I think Billy *threw* that soup.

*So Claggart struck out at a boy coming from the other direction.*

Why does old Jemmy Legs hate Billy Budd?



Because Billy is both good-looking and nice. When he wants something on Billy, I have to make it up.

That's not fair to Billy.



Maybe not. But I take orders from Claggart. And so do you!



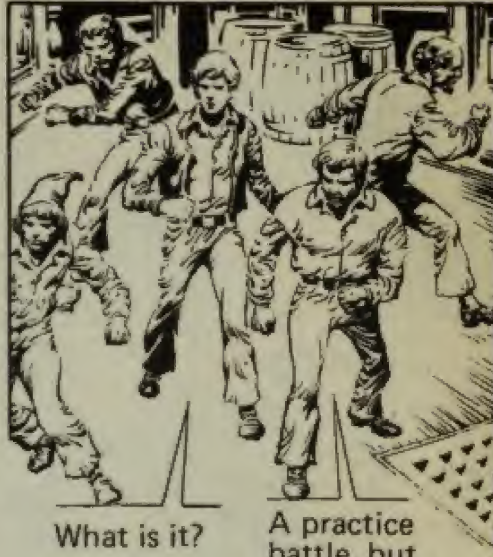
## Billy Budd

*Just after dinner, the beating of drums was heard throughout the Indomitable.*



Hurry! Do you know which is your cannon?

Aye. Number five.



What is it?

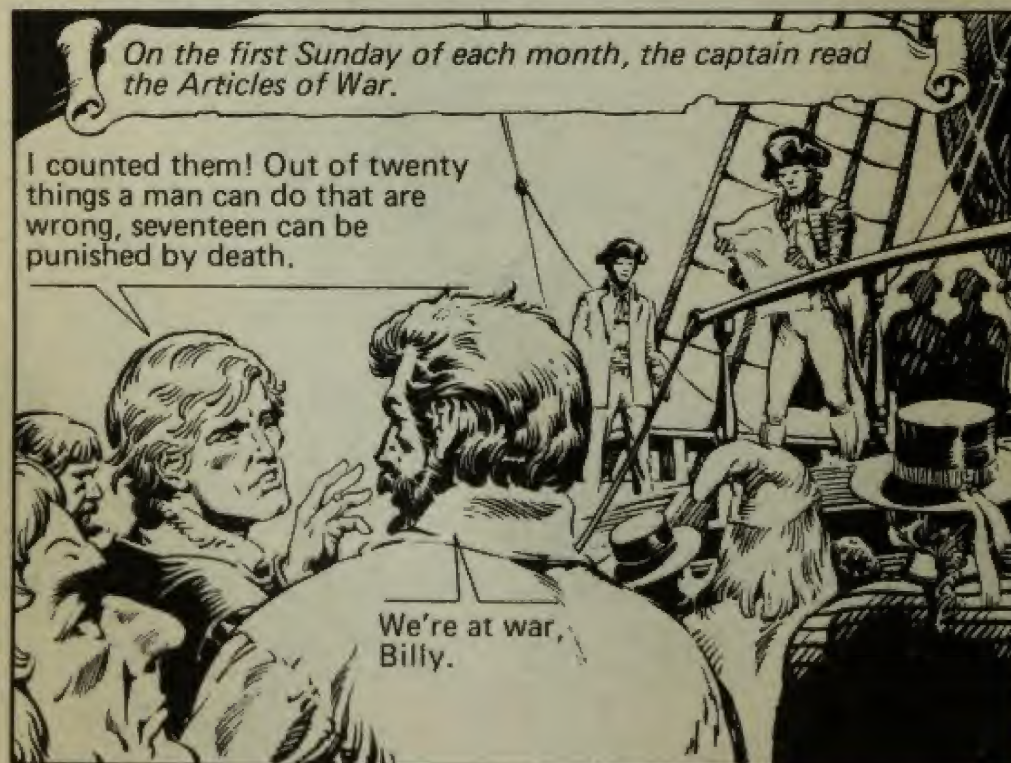
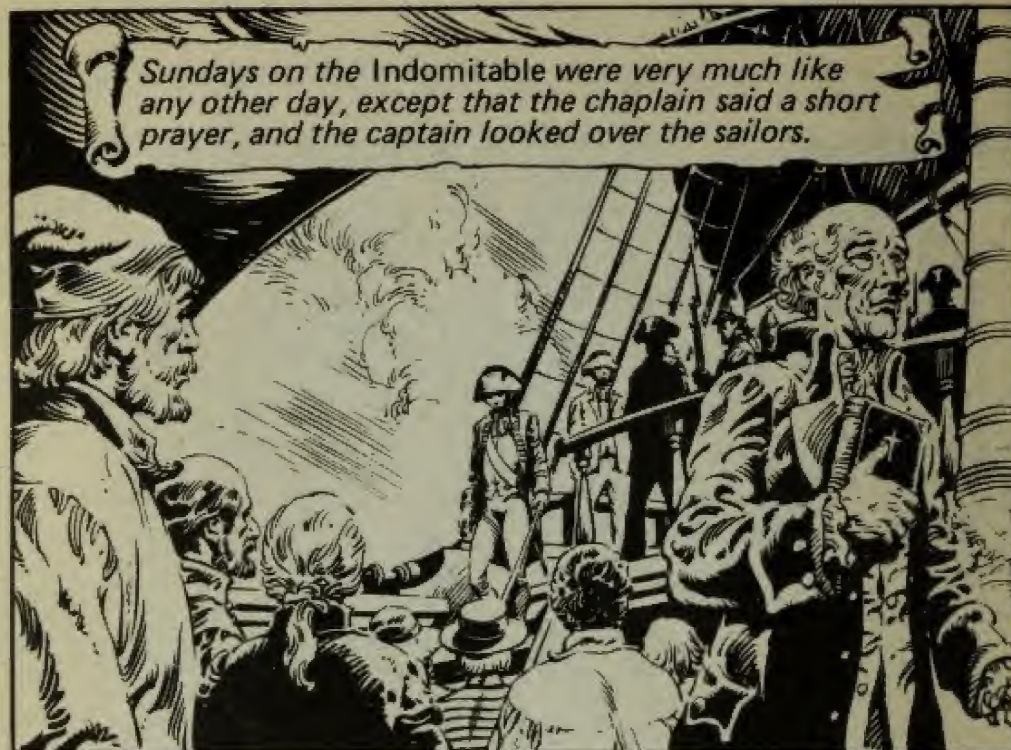
A practice battle, but you must still hurry!



*Billy found that pulling the cannons was the hardest work of all.*

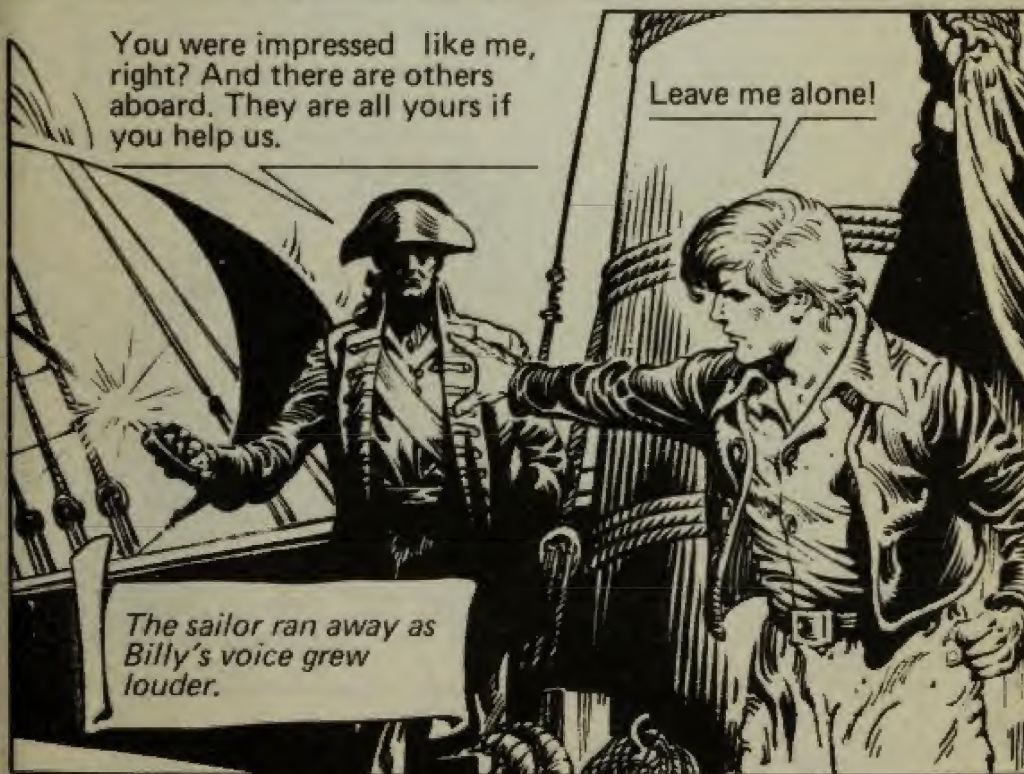


## POCKET CLASSICS





## Billy Budd





## POCKET CLASSICS



*The other sailor went back to sleep, but Billy didn't know what to think. He had never been asked to do anything wrong before.*

*The next day, Billy saw the guard on the gun deck. He gave Billy a friendly nod.*

*A few days later, the guard gave Billy another cheerful greeting. Billy did not answer.*



*Billy never thought of reporting the guard as a troublemaker.*



*But Billy again asked the old Dansker for help.*

Didn't I tell you,  
Billy Budd? Old  
Jemmy legs is  
out to get you.

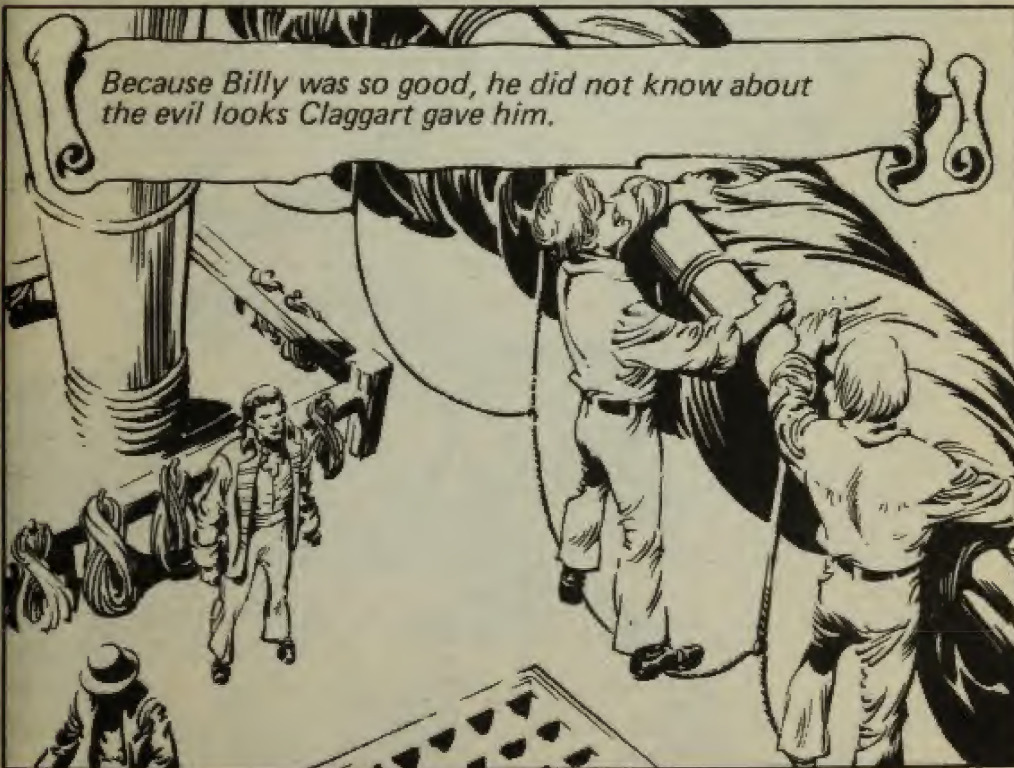
What does  
Claggart  
have to do  
with the  
guard?

Claggart sent him  
to you, lad. To  
catch you doing  
something wrong.



I can't be-  
lieve that.

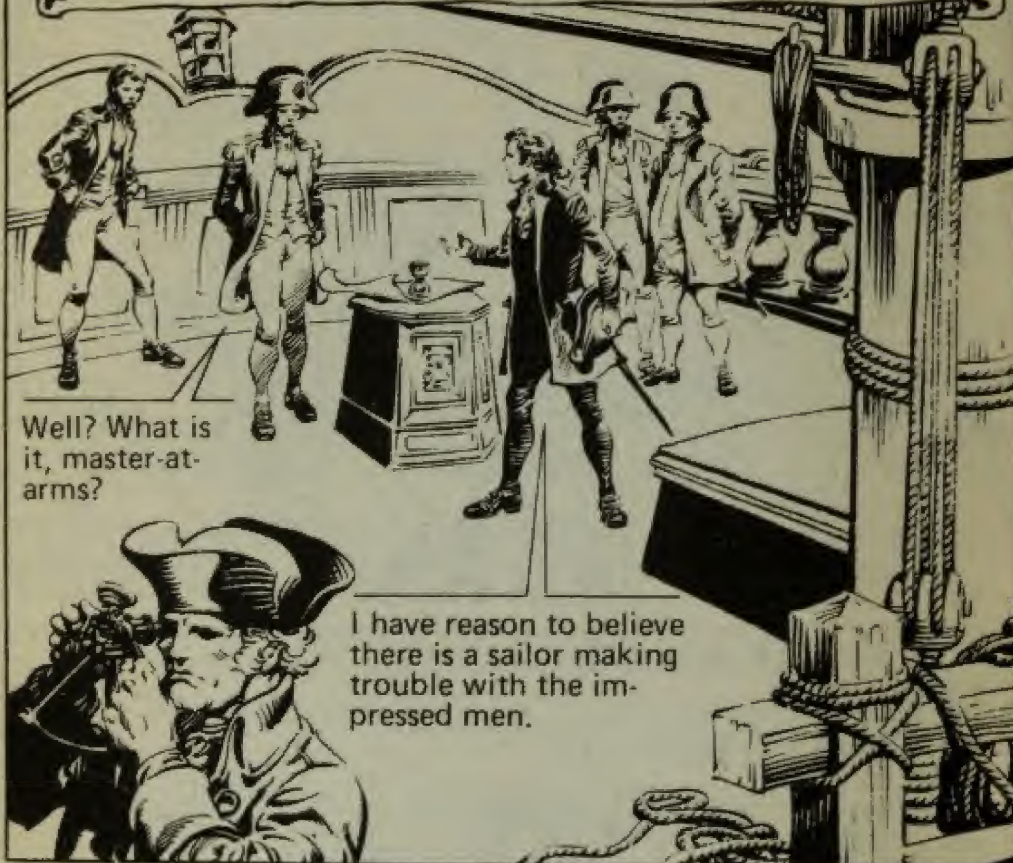
*Because Billy was so good, he did not know about  
the evil looks Claggart gave him.*





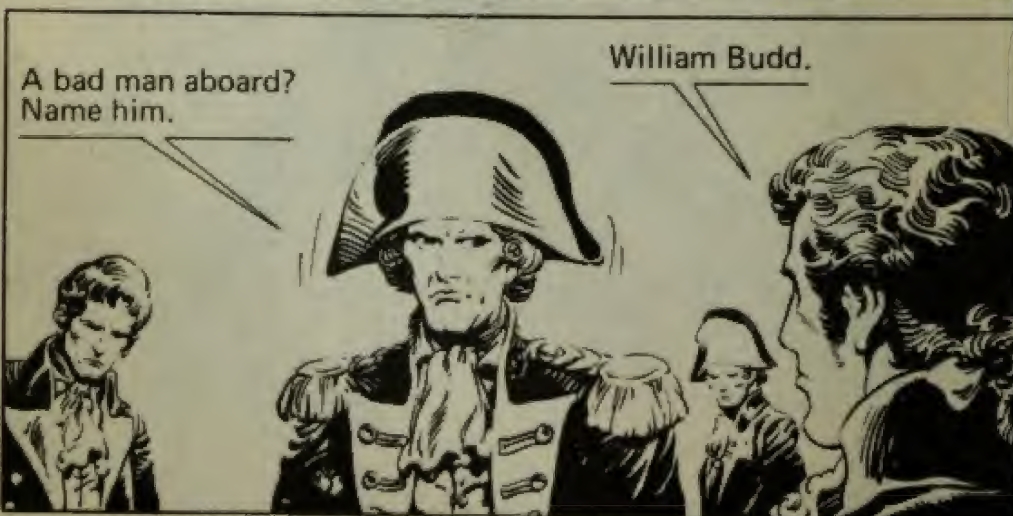
## POCKET CLASSICS

*The Indomitable had been sent on special duty. It was far from the other British ships. One day Claggart asked for a meeting with Captain Vere.*



Well? What is it, master-at-arms?

I have reason to believe there is a sailor making trouble with the impressed men.



A bad man aboard? Name him.

William Budd.



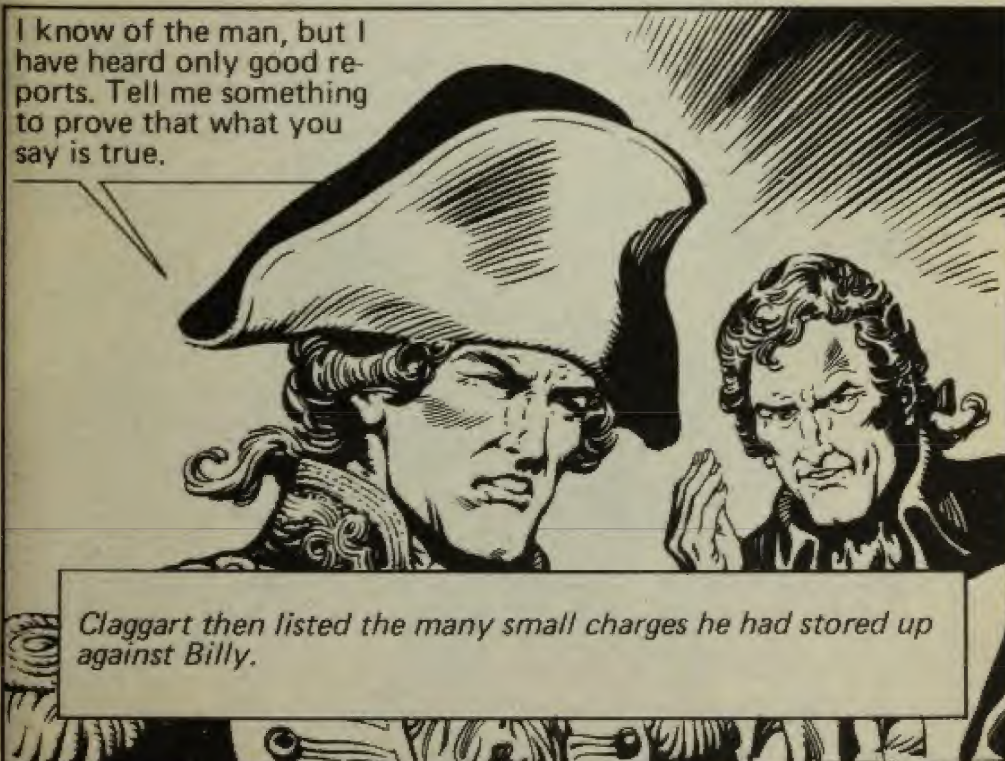
## Billy Budd

Billy, the handsome sailor?  
The young fellow so well  
liked by the others?

The same. He's not as  
nice as he looks!



I know of the man, but I  
have heard only good re-  
ports. Tell me something  
to prove that what you  
say is true.



*Claggart then listed the many small charges he had stored up  
against Billy.*



## POCKET CLASSICS

*Captain Vere turned to a midshipman.*

Send Albert, my cabin boy, to me.



Do you know Billy Budd?

Yes, sir.



Find him and bring him to my cabin. Don't let him talk to anyone else!



Master-at-arms, quietly follow the sailor into my cabin.



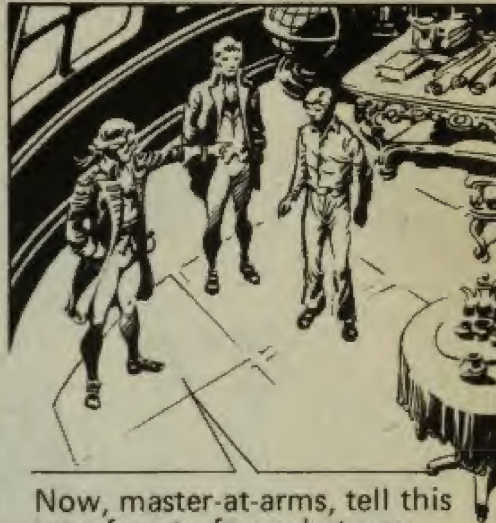


## Billy Budd

*The captain was a good judge of men. He did not trust Claggart. He felt that when the master-at-arms faced Billy, he would be able to learn the truth.*



Shut the door.  
Let no one in.



Now, master-at-arms, tell this man face-to-face what you have told me.

*Claggart stood directly in front of Billy. He repeated what he had told the captain. Billy could not believe what he was hearing.*



Speak, man!  
Speak! Say  
that it isn't  
true!



## POCKET CLASSICS

*Billy turned pale. His mouth opened, but only strange sounds came out. The captain understood.*

There is no hurry, my boy. Take your time. Take your time.

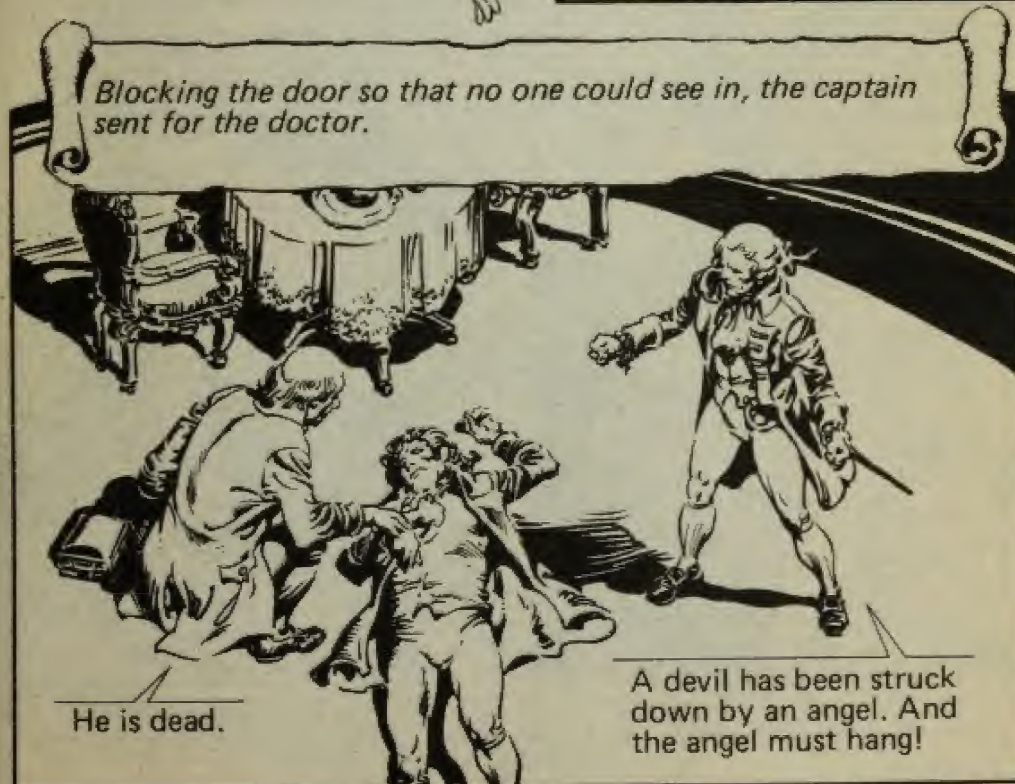
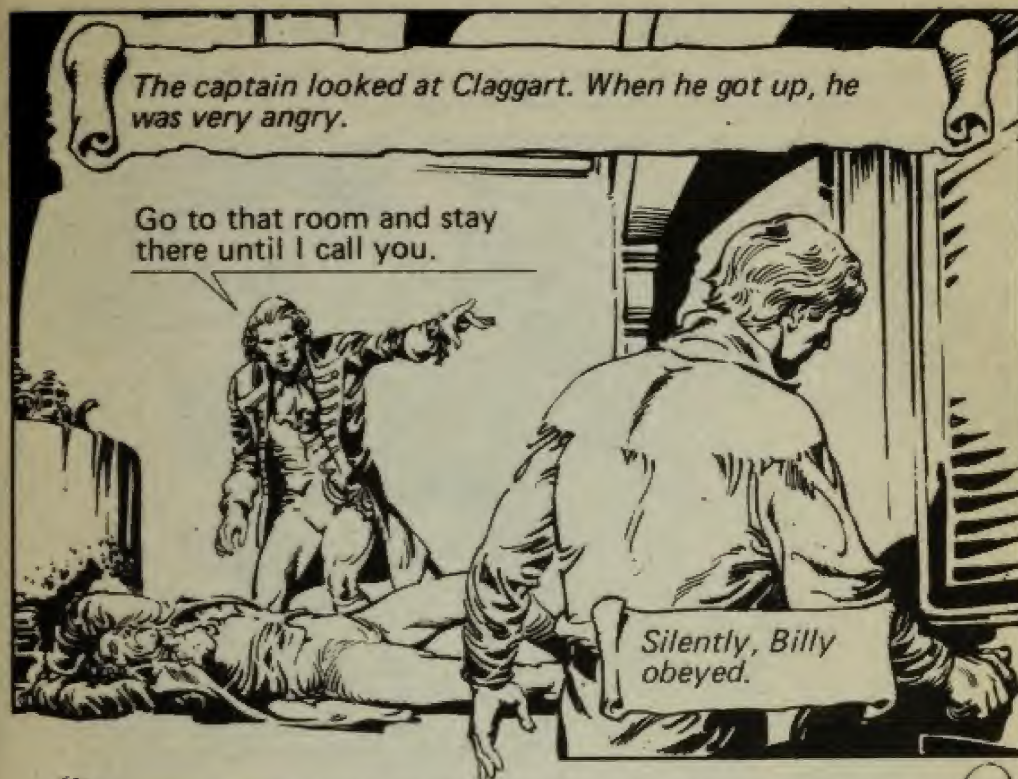


*The harder Billy tried to speak, the more trouble he had. Suddenly his right arm shot out and Claggart dropped to the deck.*

What have you done?

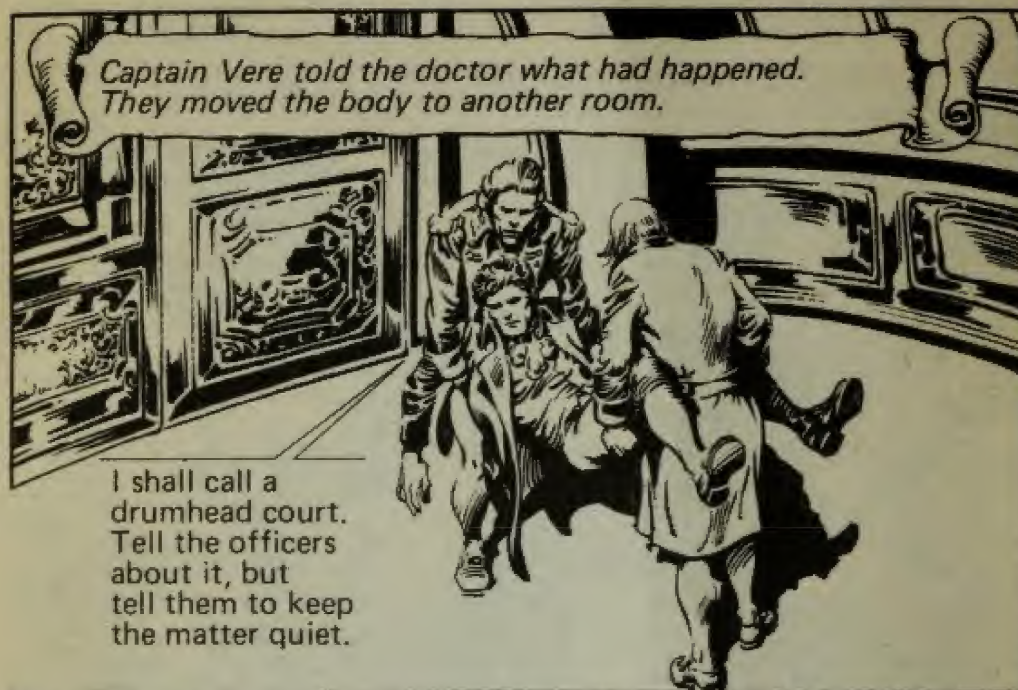






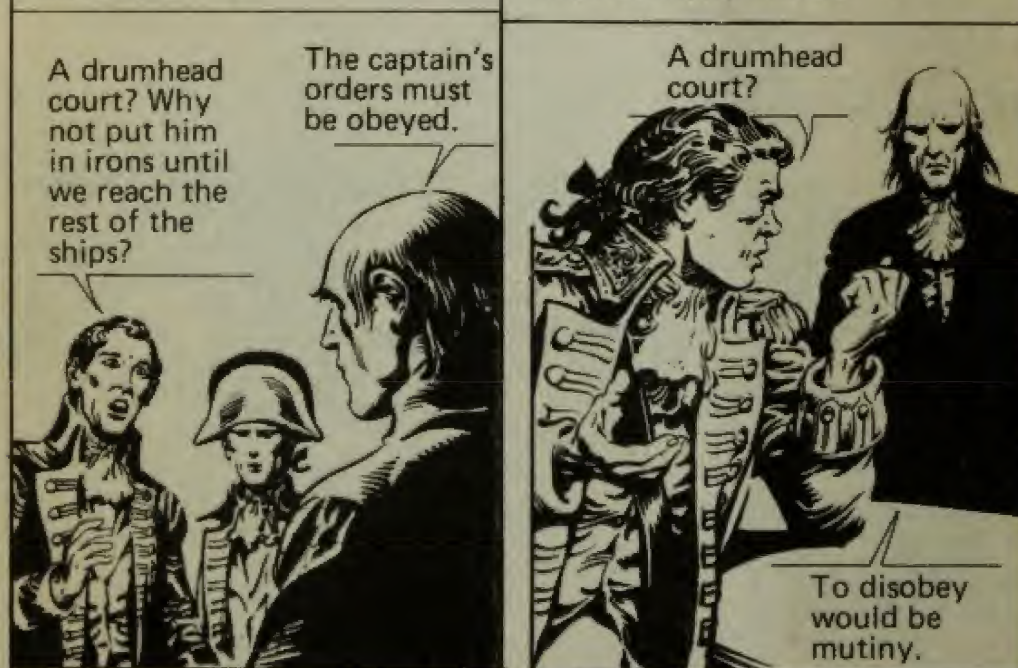


## POCKET CLASSICS



*But the officers did not like this news.*

*The captain of the marines was not happy either.*



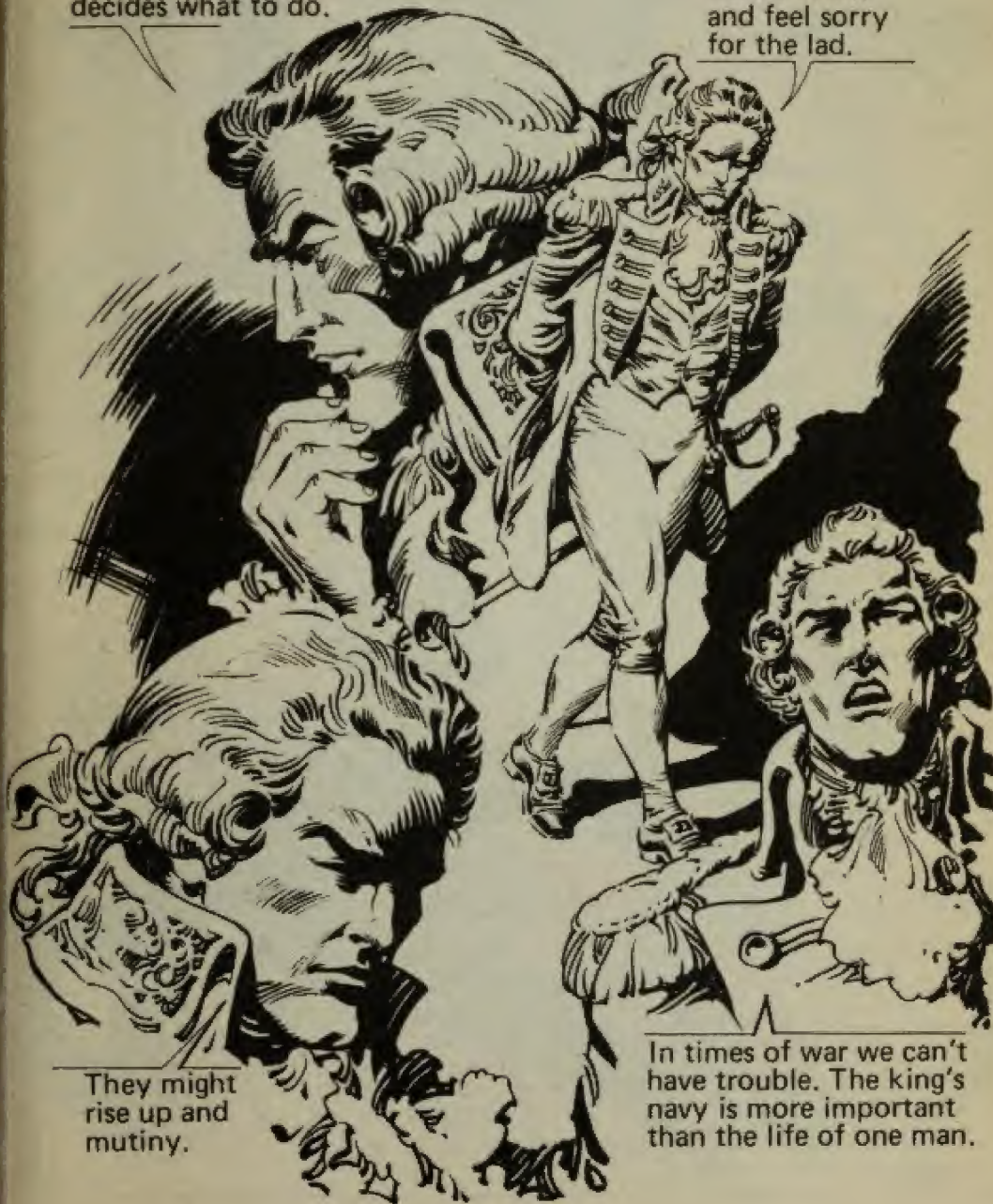
*The officers knew that such a trial was correct during wartime. But they also knew that Billy had been provoked into killing Claggart.*



*The doctor wondered if the captain was all right. Indeed, Captain Vere was having a hard time making up his mind.*

The lad could not help it.  
But I can't keep him in  
irons until the admiral  
decides what to do.

The whole ship  
would know—  
and feel sorry  
for the lad.



They might  
rise up and  
mutiny.

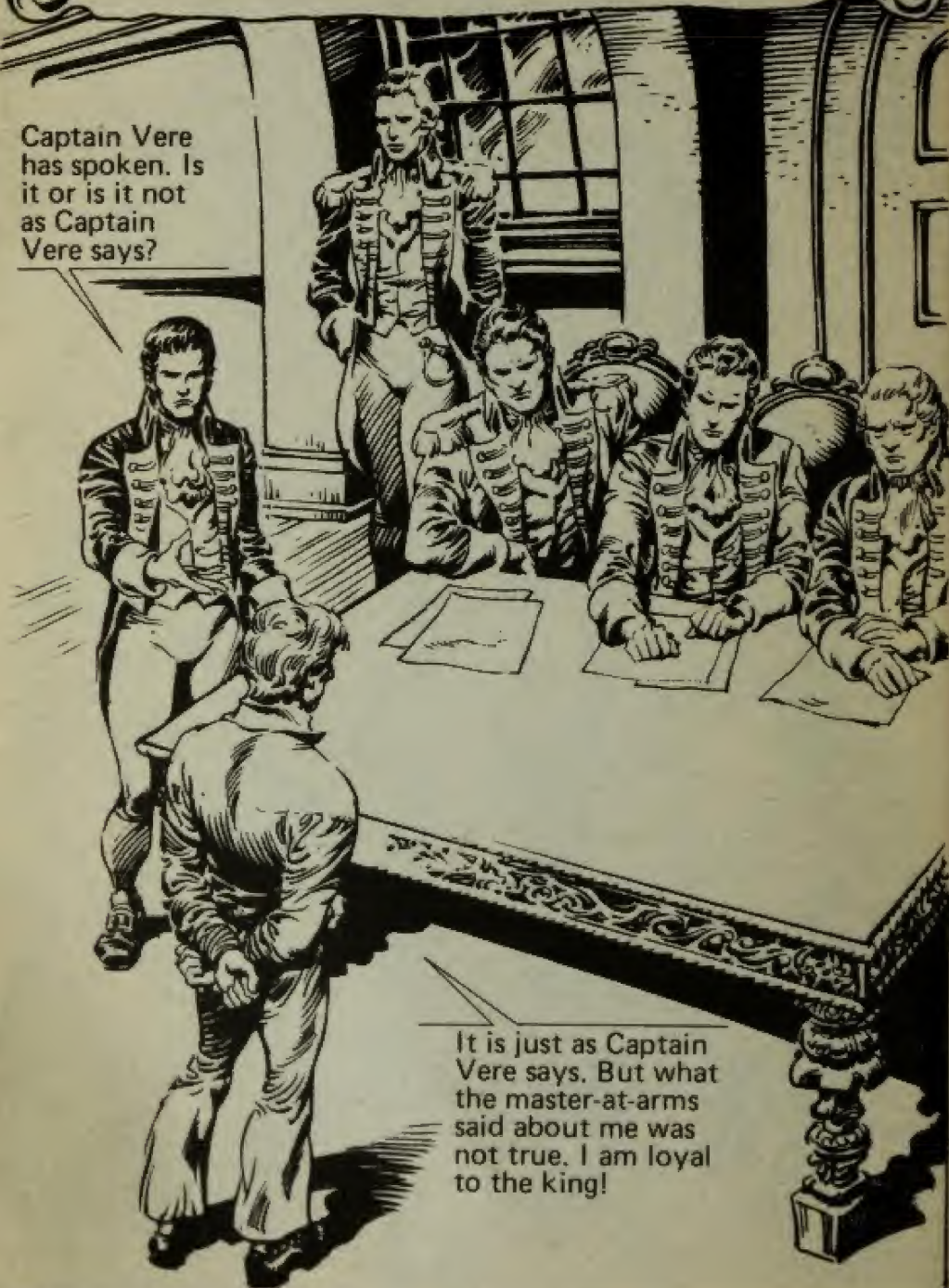
In times of war we can't  
have trouble. The king's  
navy is more important  
than the life of one man.



## POCKET CLASSICS

*Several officers made up the drumhead court. Captain Vere told exactly what Claggart had said and what Billy had done.*

Captain Vere has spoken. Is it or is it not as Captain Vere says?



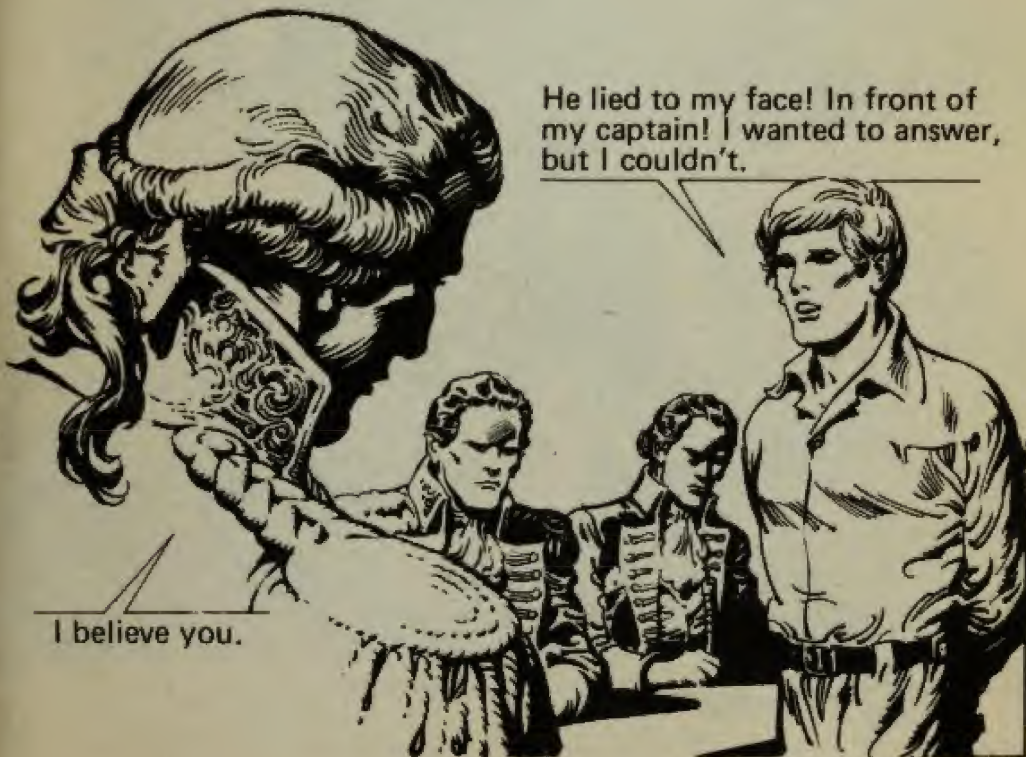
It is just as Captain Vere says. But what the master-at-arms said about me was not true. I am loyal to the king!





Was there bad feeling between you?

None. I am sorry he is dead. If I could have talked, I would not have hit him.



I believe you.

He lied to my face! In front of my captain! I wanted to answer, but I couldn't.



## POCKET CLASSICS

Did you know of  
any trouble starting  
up in the ship?

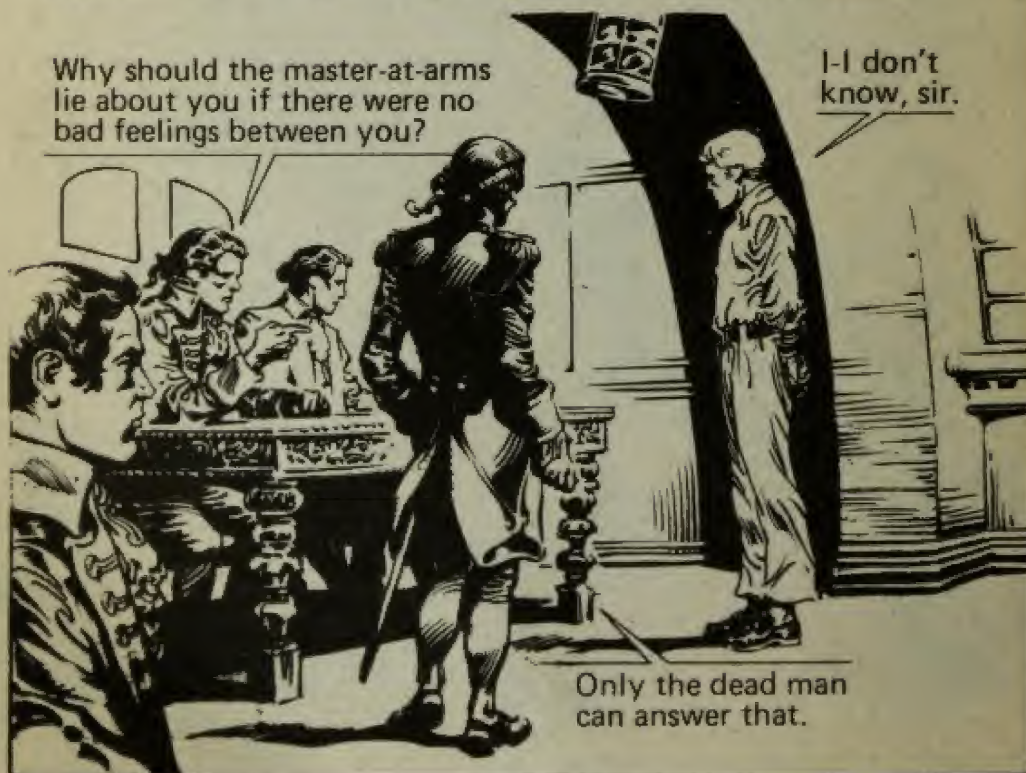
No,  
sir.



*Billy did not want to speak  
against the guard.*

Why should the master-at-arms  
lie about you if there were no  
bad feelings between you?

I-I don't  
know, sir.



*Only the dead man  
can answer that.*



## Billy Budd

It is all so strange.

Aye. But we must deal with what Billy has done.



Budd, if you have anything more to say for yourself, say it now.

I have said it all, sir.



The guard was called. He took Billy back to another room and watched over him.



## POCKET CLASSICS

*Captain Vere stood with his back to the drumhead court. The three officers spoke together for a few minutes, and then they were silent. The captain turned.*



I share your feelings for the prisoner. But as the king's officers, we are not free men.

There is a war going on, whether we like it or not.



Your hearts are moved, as is mine. But our heads must stay clear.



## Billy Budd

We must follow  
wartime law.

If a man strikes an  
officer, and the  
officer dies. . . .

Could we not  
find him guilty—  
but let him go?

No. The sailors  
would wonder  
why. They would  
think we were  
afraid of them.  
They might mutiny.



*The court said that Billy was guilty. He was to be hanged during  
the early morning watch.*



## POCKET CLASSICS

*Captain Vere chose to tell Billy himself, alone. As they came from the room, Billy looked calm, but the captain looked as if his own son were going to die.*

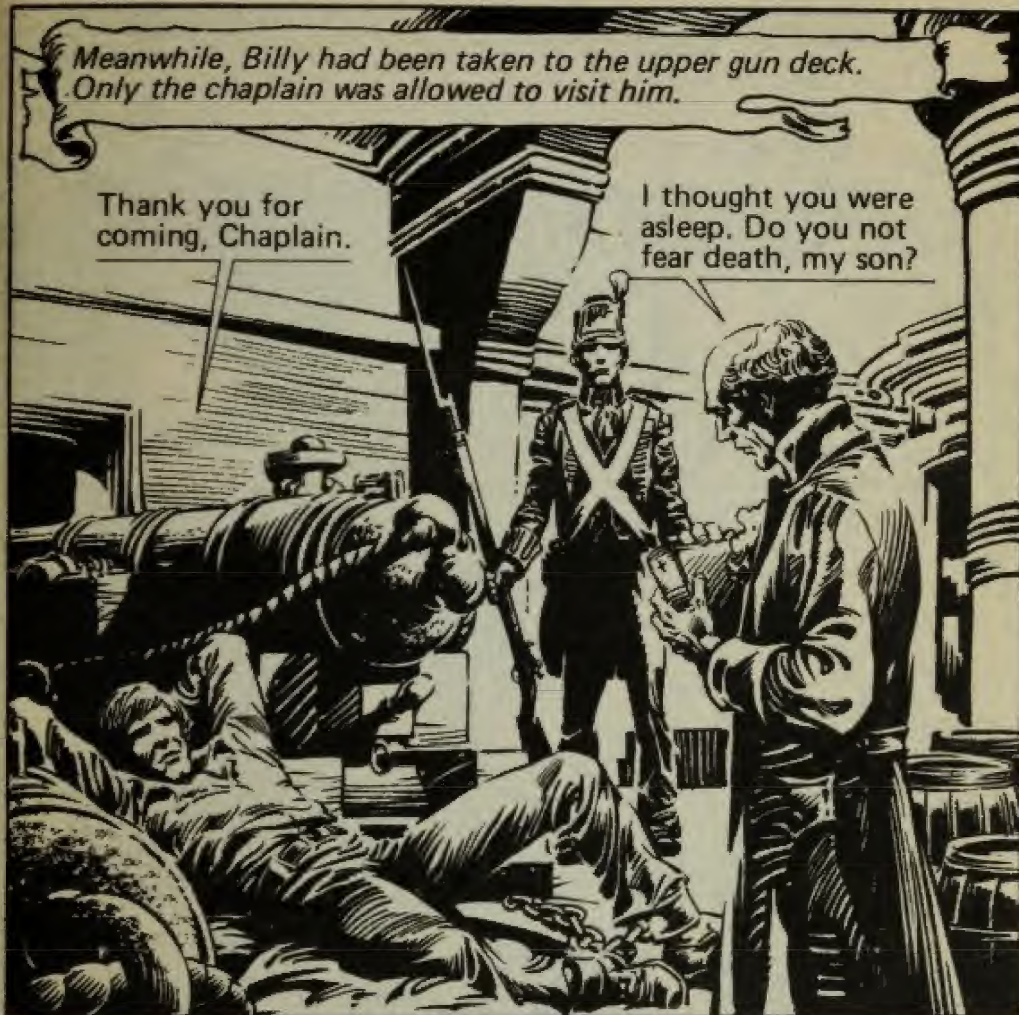
*Everyone was called on deck. The captain told the men that the master-at-arms was dead; a court had tried a man and found him guilty; and that the prisoner was to be hanged in the early morning watch.*



*Later the master-at-arms was given a funeral.*

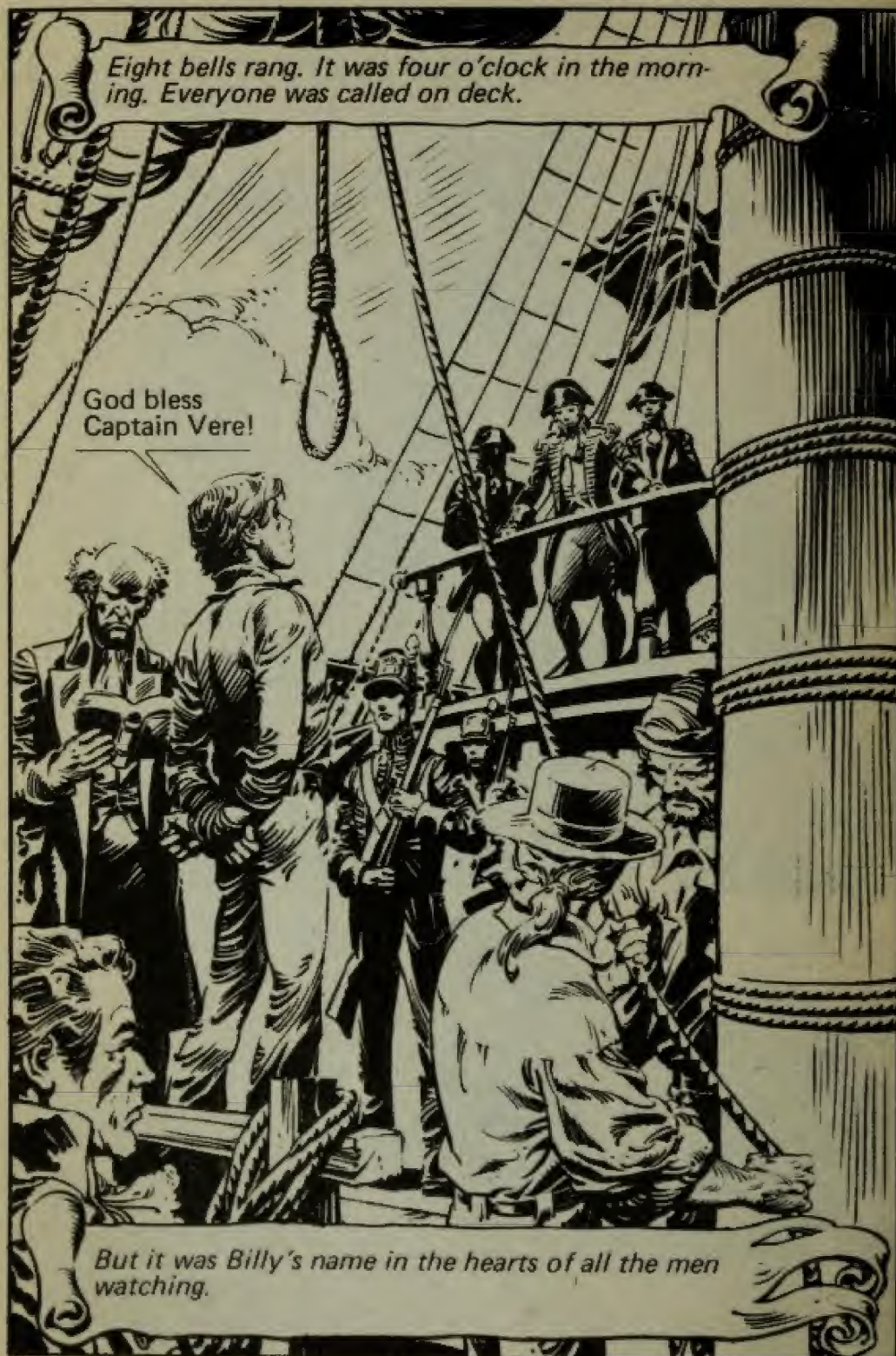








## POCKET CLASSICS





*A sound like that of a storm filled the air. It quickly stopped as the starboard watch was sent below. Soon the larboard watch was put to work.*



*Billy's hammock was filled with ballast. After his body was put in, the sailmakers sewed it up. Again, everyone was called on deck.*



## POCKET CLASSICS

*Billy Budd had a simple funeral. Sea birds circled overhead.*



*The same sound of a storm filled the air. The men were restless. The sound stopped when the drums beat, calling the men to the cannons for practice.*



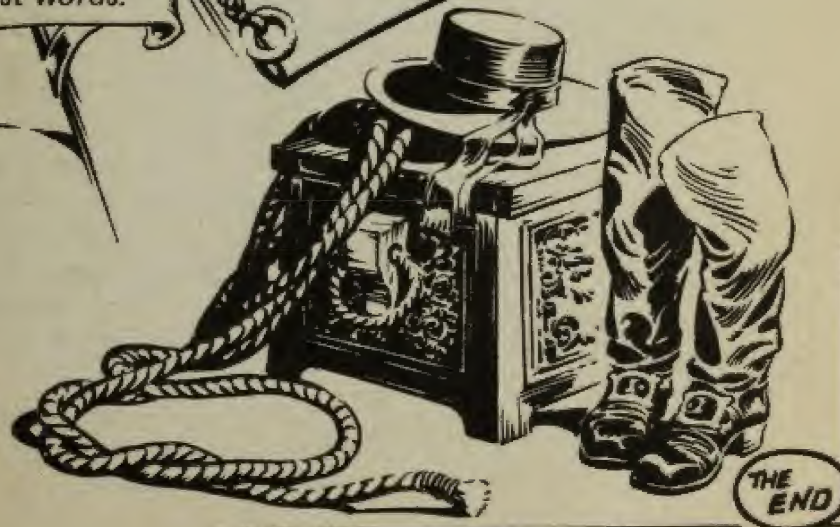
## Billy Budd

*Not long afterward, the Indomitable fought with a French ship. Captain Vere was hit by a cannon ball.*

Did you  
say some-  
thing, sir?

Yes, Billy Budd.  
Billy Budd.

*Those were the cap-  
tain's last words.*



THE  
END



## COMPLETE LIST OF POCKET CLASSICS AVAILABLE

### CLASSICS

- C 1 Black Beauty ✓
- ~~C~~ 2 The Call of the Wild ✓
- ~~C~~ 3 Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde ✓
- ~~C~~ 4 Dracula ✓
- ~~C~~ 5 Frankenstein ✓
- ~~C~~ 6 Huckleberry Finn ✓
- ~~C~~ 7 Moby Dick ✓
- C 8 The Red Badge of Courage ✓
- ~~C~~ 9 The Time Machine ✓
- C10 Tom Sawyer ✓
- C11 Treasure Island ✓
- C12 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea ✓
- C13 The Great Adventures of Sherlock Holmes ✓
- ~~C~~14 Gulliver's Travels ✓
- ~~C~~15 The Hunchback of Notre Dame ✓
- ~~C~~16 The Invisible Man ✓
- ~~C~~17 Journey to the Center of the Earth ✓
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